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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination, during the first part of its thirty-sixth session, requested that the Secretary-General be asked to present to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session, through the Committee during the second part of its thirty-sixth session, a shor and concise document to be considered for inclusion in the proposed medium-term plan outlining the broad areas of priority for the period of the plan, based on the relevant resolutions and decisions of the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations, taking into account the views expressed by Member States as reflected in paragraphs 35 to 48 of its report on the first part of its thirty-sixth session (A/51/16 (Part I)).

2. The report so requested has been prepared accordingly, based on agreements reached by the intergovernmental bodies, including the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, and is presented in the annex to the present note.

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ANNEX

1. Following the end of the cold war, and as the end of the century approaches, new opportunities for peace, development, democracy and cooperation must be created. The speed and extent of change in today's world point to a future of great complexity and challenge and to a sharp increase in the level of expectations of the United Nations.

2. The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations provided an opportunity to redirect it to greater service to humankind, especially to those who are suffering and are deeply deprived. On that occasion, Member States declared their determination that the United Nations of the future would work with renewed vigour and effectiveness in promoting peace, development, equality and justice and understanding among the peoples of the world, and that they would give to the twenty-first century a United Nations equipped, financed and structured to serve effectively the peoples in whose name it was established.

3. In response to those commitments by Member States, the work of the Organization would be guided by the following for the medium-term plan period 1998-2001.

1. Persistent problems

4. The end of the cold war removed many of the previous constraints on the political role of the Organization. The United Nations has undertaken many successful peace-keeping operations and launched many activities aimed at preventing or resolving disputes or situations that may threaten international peace and security, and has saved the lives of millions of civilians. Yet the world is still far from secure and peaceful: many parts of it are still fraught with inter- and intra-State conflict and tensions.

5. Among the persistent problems that inhibit the Organization's ability to promote prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts are the inherent difficulties of controlling and resolving the kind of internal conflict that prevails in the world today; the absence of a clearer definition of the scope and limits of the United Nations political role in the post-cold-war era; the reluctance of Governments to accept United Nations involvement in an internal conflict until it is already too late for preventive action; the tendency of public opinion to assume that the United Nations can always play a useful role in any conflict, irrespective of whether existing conditions actually permit it to intervene effectively; and the scarcity of resources made available for the Organization's activities in this area.

6. With the end of the cold war, the possibility of nuclear annihilation has been considerably reduced. However, the pursuit of the goal to eliminate weapons of mass destruction and to control and to reduce conventional weapons is still far from realization.

7. A dynamic, vigorous, free and equitable international economic environment is essential to the well-being of humankind and to international peace, security and stability. This objective must be addressed, in greater measure and more effectively, by the United Nations system. The United Nations has played an important role in the promotion of economic and social development and has, over the years, provided life-saving assistance to women, children and men around the world. However, the pledge recorded in the Charter that all Members of the United Nations shall take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development has not been adequately implemented.

8. The gap between the developed and developing countries remains unacceptably wide and continues to grow. Imbalances and uncertainties continue to exist in the global economy that affect all countries but in particular the interests of the developing countries.

9. Poverty continues to affect far too many people in the world and is particularly severe in developing countries. Hunger and malnutrition, ill-health, lack of access to safe drinking water, limited access to education and other public services and resources, exclusion, lack of participation and violence are some of the many elements that characterize poverty.

10. The critical situations of the least developed countries, which are particularly marginalized from the world economy, require the priority attention of the entire international community, in support of appropriate domestic economic and social policies. The heavy burden of debt and debt service on their economies, deterioration in the terms of trade, decline in real terms in recent years in the overall level of official development assistance and limited flows of private resources are some of th. main factors that impede the already limited opportunities for these countries to participate in and benefit from the process of globalization and liberalization.

11. The critical socio-economic situation in Africa is of priority concern. Africa is the only region where poverty is expected to continue to increase substantially. Much of the continent suffers from, inter alia, inadequate physical and institutional infrastructure, poor human resource development, lack of food security, malnutrition, hunger, widespread epidemics and diseases, and unemployment and underemployment. Those conditions are further compounded by a number of conflict and disaster situations. All those diverse limitations and constraints make it difficult for Africa to benefit fully from the processes of globalization and liberalization of trade and to integrate fully into the world economy.

12. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of all States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the universal nature of which is beyond question. It is also important for all States to ensure the universality, objectivity and non-selectivity of the consideration of human rights issues.

13. Massive or persistent violations of human rights, often the result of ethnic, racial or religious tensions or unequal access to power and basic necessities of life will continue to endanger international peace and security and to hamper economic and social development. No less serious violations of human rights, such as torture, discrimination, arbitrary executions, the sale of children and violence against women, will continue to cause grave human suffering and undermine the stability and prosperity of States. Violations of other human rights, such as the denial of food, access to health, education, work and the right to development, will be seen to be at the root of many problems and the focus of much higher interest and stronger demands for effective action.

14. While the status of women has advanced in some important respects in the past decade, progress has been uneven, inequalities between men and women have persisted and major obstacles remain to women's empowerment, with serious consequences for the well-being of people.

2. Emerging trends

15. The trends that have emerged since the end of the cold war are likely to continue during the years 1998-2001. While there should be fewer inter-State conflicts, a growing number of conflicts are taking place within States. Throughout the world, serious threats will continue to be posed by terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, international organized crime, illicit drug and arms trafficking and other such forces. In some parts of the world, breakdowns in the State and society have occurred, ranging from civil disorder to civil war.

16. The global trend towards democratization and the increased empowerment of the individual and of groups within society was not only a cause but also an effect of the end of the cold war. Recent years have witnessed a wave of democratization at the national level, as an increasing number of countries have adopted multi-party systems, organized free and fair elections and begun the movement towards more open, more participatory societies, frequently with the requested electoral assistance of the United Nations.

17. Globalization, growing interdependence in the world economy, the critical situations and special problems in many developing countries and the special problems of countries with economies in transition heighten the need for strengthened international cooperation. With the waning of ideological confrontations, the rise in globalization and the deepening of interdependence among nations, the historic opportunity has arisen for constructive dialogue among all countries, in particular among the developed and developing countries, and political mobilization for the promotion of international cooperation for development based on genuine partnership and mutuality of interests and benefits. At the same time, developing countries continue to face difficulties in benefiting from the globalization process. Many risk being marginalized and effectively excluded from the globalization process.

18. As a result of the process of globalization and growing interdependence in the economic, social and environmental fields, an increasing number of issues

cannot be effectively addressed by countries individually. Environmental hazards, population movement and disease have all become transnational problems. Trade of arms and illicit drugs have become an increasingly serious global issue. International cooperation is therefore essential. Freer flows of goods, services, finance, technology and ideas are contributing to increasing the economic and social well-being and enjoyment of individual freedoms in many countries. An encouraging development in recent years has been the almost universal pursuit of increased economic openness and integration. It is a common responsibility and in the common interest to ensure that those trends continue and also to ensure the benefits stemming from future growth.

19. Furthermore, non-State actors with a global reach, such as transnational corporations, private financial institutions and non-governmental organizations, have important roles to play in the emerging network of international cooperation. The deepening interdependence among countries has already led to the emergence and strengthening of regional economic groupings and arrangements, which are recognized as important catalysts for global economic growth and expansion of trade. They offer a framework for fostering and enhancing cooperation among States not only on economic policy but on other areas of common concern as well. Regional economic groupings and arrangements that are outward-oriented, supportive of and complementary to the multilateral trading system are important actors in the global development process.

20. Total net resource flows to developing countries have expanded rapidly in the 1990s. However, the trend has not been universal, in terms of either the types of financing or the recipients. Although private resource flows to developing countries, including foreign direct investment, have increased in recent years, official (public sector) flows have languished; all the growth has been accounted for by an increase in the private sector component. Official development assistance is a small proportion of a country's total resources for development, but is a significant source of external resources for many developing countries, particularly African countries and the least developed countries. As such, it can play an important complementary and catalytic role in promoting economic growth. Despite its critical importance, the overall decline in official development assistance is a serious cause for concern.

21. Political instability, internal conflicts and environmental degradation are likely to increase the number and magnitude of man-made and natural emergencies, including flows of refugees and displaced persons.

22. There has been a marked increase in support by Member States for international action in favour of human rights and a willingness of States to upgrade national standards to international norms. Respect for human rights is now recognized as an essential element in long-term economic and social development. It has also been recognized that many, if not all, threats to international peace and security have roots in inequalities and human rights violations. There is an increasingly strong call for the abolition of impunity and the need to recognize the personal criminal responsibility of those engaged in massive human rights violations. Member States are increasingly emphasizing that international human rights activities must be made more operational through assistance to Governments, in human rights field operations or through inclusion

of human rights elements in other missions, as mandated by the legislative bodies.

3. Challenges

23. Internal conflicts are inherently difficult for an intergovernmental organization to handle. Established norms for regulating inter-State conflict apply only imperfectly. The rehabilitation of State structures requires a long-term integrated effort by almost all of the programmes, funds, offices and agencies of the United Nations system. The need to address the civilian suffering that invariably accompanies such conflicts also requires much greater resources and wider powers of coordination than the United Nations currently possesses.

24. In order to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes, it is necessary to encourage the emergence of an international ethos under which there would be a predisposition on the part of Member States in actual or potential conflict to accept the Secretary-General's good offices when offered, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

25. The capacity of the United Nations to launch peacemaking and peace-keeping activities more quickly and effectively, in response to the call by Member States and legislative organs, has to be strengthened in order to address threats to peace and security.

26. Accelerating globalization and interdependence in the world economy call for policy measures designed to ensure the maximization of the benefits from and the minimization of the negative effects of those trends for all countries. The specific problems of countries with economies in transition with respect to their twofold transition to democracy and a market economy should also be recognized.

27. Increasing the capacity to respond to these global trends requires sound domestic policies as well as a favourable international economic environment. Each country ultimately bears primary responsibility for its own economic and social policies for development. The international community should give strong support to the efforts of developing countries to solve their serious social and economic problems and should promote a favourable international economic environment for development.

28. The liberalization of trade regimes and the promotion of an open and secure multilateral trading system are central requirements for the promotion of economic development. All Governments should commit themselves to the liberalization of trade and investment policies and should foster international cooperation towards that goal. All countries have a shared interest in an open, rule-based, equitable, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system.

29. There is an urgent need for effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries, and to help them exit from the rescheduling process. The evolving

debt strategy has contributed to the improvement in the debt situation of a number of developing countries. Although debt-relief measures have been undertaken by creditor countries, external debt and debt-servicing problems have persisted, in particular for the poorest and heavily indebted countries. Debt-service problems of middle-income countries should continue to be addressed effectively.

30. There is a need for broadening and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the international economic decision process. Effective participation of all countries in multilateral surveillance is necessary to ensure sustained economic growth and sustainable development. International institutions should, in accordance with their respective charters, attain a truly democratic and international character.

31. The growth in foreign direct investment in developing countries is of particular importance since, in addition to finance, the recipient economy usually benefits in terms of technology transfer and enhanced access to export markets. It is also important to reverse the overall decline in official development assistance flows and to achieve internationally agreed assistance targets of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for overall official development assistance, including 0.15 per cent of GNP for assistance for the least developed countries as soon as possible, with particular priority to Africa.

32. The critical socio-economic condition of Africa concerns the international community as a whole and requires global partnership and solidarity to address and solve. Although Africa is faced with enormous problems, it also has a great potential, both in human and natural resources, for sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Tackling the problems and paving the way to accelerated and self-sustaining growth and sustainable development through decisive implementation of commitments and actions have, however, been lacking.

33. While progress has been achieved in many areas of social integration, there have also been negative developments, such as social polarization, widening disparities and inequalities of income and wealth within and among nations, marginalization of people, families and social groups. These are compelling reasons for actions by Governments, individually and, as appropriate, jointly, to foster social cohesion, while recognizing and protecting diversity. An inclusive society must be based on respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, on non-discrimination, tolerance, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security and respect for diversity, and on the participation of all people, including the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and persons. The problems of crime, violence and abuse of and trafficking in drugs should also be addressed.

34. Many emergencies reflect the underlying crisis of development facing many developing countries, which needs to be addressed by Governments and the international community if such emergencies are not to recur. Therefore, in order to prevent the occurrence or recurrence of emergency situations, support is required for medium- and long-term social and economic development.

4. Role of the Organization

Peace

35. The United Nations must now take up the challenge in carrying out the mandates given by Member States in preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building. During the period covered by the medium-term plan, the United Nations will continue to give high priority to the Organization's role in the maintenance of peace and security, attaching special significance to peaceful settlement of disputes and to the need to build lasting peace on economic and social development.

36. In response to requests from Member States, the United Nations has recently adopted a series of initiatives for peaceful settlement of disputes, ranging from preventive deployment to verification of human rights agreements as part of the peace process, establishment of commissions on inquiry, fact-finding missions and so on.

37. The United Nations will continue to undertake or to participate in multidimensional peace operations. In recent years there has been a marked increase in cooperation and consultation between the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. It is important to strengthen that development still further to maximize the effectiveness of such operations. To achieve this, regional organizations, especially in Africa, are going to need assistance in building their own capacity in those areas.

38. To increase further the efficiency of peace-keeping, action is required in a number of areas. Every effort must be made by all concerned to define peace-keeping mandates in clear and practical terms; and Member States need to make available sufficient resources for their implementation. Arrangements have to be made to ensure that national contingents are adequately equipped and trained. Lines of command need to be clearly established and respected. Some form of rapid reaction capability should be at the disposal of the Security Council in order to minimize delays in deployment once the Council has authorized a peace-keeping mission. With this in mind, the Secretariat is now considering an offer made by a number of Member States for the establishment of a rapid deployment headquarters at no cost to the Organization. Lastly, Member States may wish to give priority attention to the formulation of a binding convention that would make it an international crime to attack United Nations personnel participating in peace-keeping operations in whatever capacity.

39. The need to prevent the global proliferation, both horizontal and vertical, of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction has held a prominent place on the United Nations agenda and a number of agreements reached, in particular in the last few years, have succeeded to some extent in containing that danger. The efforts of the United Nations towards nuclear disarmament must be not only sustained but also enhanced. The other equally important object has been to pursue effective measures to regulate and reduce conventional weapons and, if possible, to ban altogether certain particularly inhumane types of those weapons. The United Nations must continue to support and encourage the achievement of further reduction in the levels of armaments. At the same time,

the United Nations will have to promote effective measures to deal with the proliferation of small weapons and a total ban on the manufacture, stockpiling, transfer or use of anti-personnel mines.

40. The General Assembly has continued to reaffirm the right of self-determination. The list of Non-Self-Governing Territories under consideration by the General Assembly shows no sign of diminishing. The International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (1990-2000) instils a new sense of urgency to resolve the current situation.

41. Terrorism, transnational organized crime, illicit trade in arms and the illicit production, consumption and trafficking of narcotic drugs are global challenges that can be met only through collective action. Member States must strengthen, individually and collectively, their capacity and institutional frameworks for the prevention and control of the threat posed by terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and by transnational organized crime, for the prevention of drug abuse and for the control of illicit drug production and trafficking. International conventions and conferences set forth a comprehensive, balanced strategy for the fight against those threats, stressing mutual responsibility. In pursuing this objective, the United Nations will promote an active dialogue with Member States directly and through the support provided to policy-making bodies, and will facilitate the sharing of information and expertise among Member States.

42. The United Nations will assist Governments in their efforts to combat terrorism and in setting the bases for convergence of national legislation and regulatory measures against all forms of organized transnational crime. Special attention will be given to money-laundering and measures for the regulation of firearms. Technical advice and assistance, where necessary, will also be extended to Governments to adhere to and to implement effectively the drug-control conventions and institution-building.

43. In accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, the United Nations has been able to work in close contact with an increasing number of regional arrangements and organizations in recent years. The United Nations will take the lead in working out with the principal regional organizations principles that would define its relationship with the United Nations in common efforts to maintain peace and security.

Development

44. The United Nations has been a major catalyst for support of economic and social development of developing countries and of the disadvantaged and marginalized. Those activities must be bolstered in accordance with the growing magnitude of the problem. To some extent, the United Nations can assist directly by providing advice and assistance. However, an important role lies in identifying and analysing problems and in stimulating the willingness and capacity to take action, both nationally and cooperatively among nations.

45. A challenge for the Organization in all aspects of its operations in the coming years will be to identify and reach intergovernmental consensus on those areas and activities where it can and is required to play a major role. As part

of that process, it will be increasingly important to involve regional bodies and new global actors, including non-governmental organizations and other key actors of civil society, in policy-making deliberations and standard-setting initiatives of the international community.

46. The accords, commitments and internationally agreed targets reached at United Nations global conferences and United Nations organs, in the multifaceted and interrelated issues of the environment, population, social development, crime, the advancement of women, human settlements, trade and development and public administration should be fully implemented by all States and international organizations. Only through full implementation can we give credence to the notion that those development initiatives are truly a priority issue for the international community. The agreements reached at the related international conferences and other meetings of the United Nations continue to be relevant and the need for an integrated, interrelated and coherent implementation and coordinated follow-up to the conferences should be stressed. The effective implementation of the decisions and commitments reached at the recent series of United Nations global conferences and other meetings requires the urgent mobilization and more efficient use of resources for development.

47. Achieving sustained growth and sustainable development must remain a major global objective. Such problems as the lack of safe water, threats to biological diversity, ozone loss, global warming, declining land productivity, desertification and reduced food security persist. Despite geographical concentration in some instances, these are global problems and often require negotiated agreements on the sharing of scarce resources or environmental space. The Organization should contribute to raising international awareness of environmental trends and their negative consequences.

48. Commitments and targets agreed upon since 1990 to achieve the overall goal of poverty eradication should be fully implemented by Governments, in partnership with all development actors, the United Nations system, including financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and the international community as a whole. The United Nations system should make all efforts to enhance the coordination of actions relative to poverty eradication and to support developing and other countries in that endeavour.

49. In order to address the critical situation in Africa, the United Nations system has a major role to play in coordinating and implementing activities that address the critical situation in Africa, including through the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the Cairo Agenda for Action: Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development, the follow-up of the outcome of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development and other related initiatives. The United Nations should play a leadership role in effective implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa to meet the pressing needs of the people in Africa.

50. Special support should be given to the least developed countries in their development efforts in order to facilitate their integration into the world economy, to enable them to participate in and to allow them to benefit fully from the process of globalization and liberalization of trade and the increase in international private resource flows.

51. The fulfilment of the United Nations system's role in development and in promoting development cooperation requires resources to be provided on a sound, predictable, continuous and assured basis. The international community should support the development efforts of the United Nations system by providing a substantial increase in resources for operational activities commensurate with the needs of the developing countries and the overall resources of the United Nations. New approaches to financing the international development cooperation activities undertaken by the United Nations, including use of innovative funding sources, should continue to be examined.

52. South-South cooperation is an integral and dynamic part of international development cooperation. The countries of the South exhibit common as well as varying development experiences and know-how, which offer many opportunities at the bilateral, subregional, regional, interregional and international levels for greater cooperation between them. The United Nations will promote such cooperation to provide a stronger basis for their self-reliance and development, as well as provide an important complement to international development cooperation.

Equality

53. United Nations activities to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms for the years beyond 1998 will be directed at consolidating the progress made in implementing the Vienna Declaration and other mandates and in pursuing work in those areas where achievements are insufficient. They will be carried out on a non-selective, balanced and impartial basis, and will give priority to ways of strengthening the operational implementation of human rights through assistance to Governments and field presences or missions. Coordination will be aimed at the adoption and implementation of an integrated and global United Nations approach to the promotion and protection of human rights with each agency or programme making its own specific contribution. Continuous efforts will be made to identify human rights problems and to search for effective ways of dealing with them through discussion between Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

54. An important effort will be made to develop widespread support for the human rights programme through the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights and the building of a partnership with non-governmental organizations, the academic community and other sectors of society.

55. In the United Nations human rights programme of assistance, priority will be given to establishing criteria and implementing procedures for promoting economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development, to exploring the root causes of human rights violations, to protecting the rights of persons who can be particularly vulnerable to abuse or neglect, including youth, persons with disabilities, the elderly and migrant workers. In addition, objectives in the areas of the rights of indigenous people, human rights eduction and the fight against racism will be pursued through the implementation of the programmes of action for the respective decades.

56. The Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women are important contributions to the advancement of women

worldwide and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned, as well as by non-governmental organizations. The United Nations will promote necessary measures to strengthen laws, policies and programmes that would ensure the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of political, civil, economic, social and cultural life as equal partners and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women.

57. Children are the most important resource for the future. Greater investment in children by parents and societies is essential to the achievement of sustained economic growth, social development and environmental protection. The United Nations will promote the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and will establish means to reach the goals agreed at subsequent international forums for the year 2000 and beyond.

58. The number of refugees and displaced persons has increased rapidly as a result of a number of complex factors, especially political instability and internal strife. The United Nations will promote means to ensure the protection of refugees and displaced persons and to ensure their safe return home.

59. The United Nations will continue to strengthen further its capacity for providing an effective response to natural and man-made emergencies. Provision of humanitarian assistance must be designed with a view to ensuring transition to rehabilitation and reconstruction at the first opportunity. Prevention, preparedness, emergency response, economic recovery and rehabilitation are all part of a comprehensive response to reduce developing country vulnerability to emergencies.

Justice

60. The continued promotion and development of international law must be pursued with a view to ensuring that relations between States are based on the principles of justice, sovereign equality, universally recognized principles of international law and respect for the rule of law. Such action should take account of developments under way in such areas as technology, transport, information and resource-related fields and international financial markets, as well as the growing complexity of the work of the United Nations in the humanitarian and refugee assistance fields.

5. Directions to be pursued and priorities

61. In response to the need to address persistent problems, to respond to emerging trends and to meet the challenges of the future, the Organization will accord priority to the following areas during the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001:

(a) Maintenance of peace and security;

(b) Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development of developing countries;

(c) Development of Africa;

(d) Promotion of human rights;

(e) Effective response to humanitarian emergencies;

(f) Promotion of justice and international law.

62. In order to be able to respond effectively to the expectations of the United Nations held by peoples around the world, it is essential that the Organization itself be reformed and modernized. Member States agreed, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary, that the work of the General Assembly, the universal organ of the States Members of the United Nations, should be revitalized. Member States have also agreed that the Security Council should, inter alia, be expanded and its working methods continue to be reviewed in a way that will further strengthen its capacity and effectiveness, enhance its representative character and improve its working efficiency and transparency; as important differences on key issues continue to exist, further in-depth consideration of those issues is required. It was also agreed by Member States that the role of the Economic and Social Council should be strengthened to enable it to carry out effectively, in the modern age, the tasks it has been assigned with respect to the well-being and standards of life of all people.

63. The effort to ensure that the United Nations is able to fulfil its considerable potential into the twenty-first century is a joint responsibility of Member States and the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General will uphold high standards of management and will continue to improve the efficient administrative and financial functioning of the Organization. This will require the maintenance of a strong independent civil service of the highest calibre. At the same time, Member States must ensure a continuous, predictable and assured political and financial support in order for the Organization to meet the challenges it faces.